

TOWN OF EGREMONT, MASSACHUSETTS
MEETING OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
SPECIAL PERMIT HEARING - EGREMONT VILLAGE INN/THE BARN
MINUTES

Date: March 12, 2021

Time: 4:00PM

Place: Via Zoom Meeting
Egremont

Present via zoom meeting were Chair Cathy Fracasse, Mark Holmes, Rolfe Tessem.
Others participating via zoom: Nick Keene, Jennifer Rubin, Gigi Teeley, James Warwick, Lucinda Vermeulen, Pam Knowled.

It was announced that the meeting is video and audio recorded.

The hearing was called to take action on the application of Sarah Keene, Egremont Village Inn/The Barn, to amend the current special permit to allow for outdoor music. A similar amendment was allowed temporarily last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic as music was not allowed inside.

It was clarified that the pandemic guidelines currently allow outdoor service of alcohol up to 60 days after the state of emergency has been lifted. Current guidelines do allow for indoor music but do not allow for singing indoors.

Chair Fracasse noted that there were 2 letters received in opposition of the application. One of those letters will not be considered as it was an inappropriate attack against the business and its owners. There were also 2-3 letter of support.

Nick Keene spoke to the application.

The application seeks outdoor music and singing Wednesday through Sunday with minimal amplification from April 1 to November 31, 2021. No events will take place outdoors if the weather is bad. No Karaoke will take place outdoors. Saturday and Sunday the applicant wished to be allowed to have brunch time entertainment which would very light instrumental, jazz. There will be no loud drums - sticks are not allowed only brushes. It is asked that the limit of 3 person musical groups not be placed on this permit.

The Inn was responsive to complaints last year and those musical groups are not being invited back.

Sunday nights are planned to be quieter.

The applicants aren't asking for a permanent amendment at this time, but may in the future, along with outdoor dining.

Mark Holmes asked about outdoor dining and music prior to Covid. There was none - there were a few tables outside for band members to have cigarette breaks. No food or alcohol service.

Rolfe Tessem clarified that the changed were in the end date, adding Sunday, no restriction to 3 person bands, and that current COVID guidelines don't allow singing indoors though capacity limits have been increased both indoor and outdoor.

Jame Warwick spoke in support of the application stating that during the worst year of our lives The Barn was an extraordinary venue to revitalize its neighbors to attend.

The Board expressed its support but feels it is critical to get to add constraint to temper the impact, especially on Sundays. After some more discussion with the applicants regarding days, hours, type of music, holiday events, motion was made by Rolfe Tessem to approve a special permit for outdoor entertainment Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 5pm to 10pm, Saturday 12noon to 10pm and Sunday 12noon to 9pm from April 1, 2021 to November 31, 2021. The Board voted unanimously in roll call vote to approve.

The hearing closed at 4:55pm.

In other business the Board unanimously approved an increase in the Zoning Board of Appeals permit fee from \$250 to \$500 effective immediately to cover actual costs associated with applications.

The Board discussed the Zurrin application which was deemed as un-actionable. There is currently a court case filed by abutters which hinges on the outcome of the appeal to the Land Court decision declaring marijuana as agricultural unless a town has a specific exemption.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.

Mary Brazie,
Office Administrator

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The recording of the minutes is on record at the Town Hall for 90 days. Anyone who wishes to may obtain a copy or listen to the recording at Town Hall. Attachments are on file at Town Hall.